

Comments on Representative Ford's Statements
Regarding the Air War in North Vietnam
17 Aug 67

17 Aug 67 Comments on Representative Ford's Statements Regarding
the Air War in North Vietnam (comments on Ford's
8 Aug 67 press conference on the Rolling Thunder
Program)

JCS review completed.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Economic Research

SUBJECT : Comments on Representative Ford's Statements
Regarding the Air War in North Vietnam

1. Representative Gerald Ford, in a press conference held on 8 August 1967, asserted that the President had severely reduced the effectiveness of the Rolling Thunder Program by imposing restrictions on targets that may be struck and cited a number of statistics to support this view.

2. It is difficult to analyze Representative Ford's assertions with precision because of the terminology used. He referred to "significant military targets" and "top priority targets." The only list of "priority" or "significant" targets available on North Vietnam is the Joint Chiefs of Staff Target List. The JCS target list contains 242 of the most significant military and economic targets in North Vietnam. Very few significant targets are not on the JCS list, and most of these have been available as targets.

3. Our analysis indicates that the restrictions have not been as severe as implied and that considerably more targets have been struck than Representative Ford suggests.

4. The attached Annex A gives Representative Ford's statements and our comments. Annex B shows JCS targets by type of target and the number and percentage not struck or authorized to be struck. A summary of the restrictions on air strikes in force between 20 July 1967 and 8 August 1967 and the supplementary authorization for strikes issued on 8 August 1967 is presented in Annex C.

Acting Chief, Trade and Services Division

Attachments: (3)
As stated.

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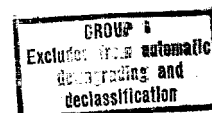
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ANNEX A

Statements Attributed to Representative Ford and OER Comments

1. Statement: Three out of every 10 significant military targets have ever been struck by U.S. air power. Nearly half the "identified" top priority targets in North Vietnam were officially off limits to air attack under high-level orders from Washington.

Comment: Of the 242 military and economic targets on the JCS list, 190 have been struck -- 79 percent. An additional 7 targets -- 1 airfield, 4 bridges, 1 military barracks, headquarters, and 1 naval base -- are authorized for air strikes. The remaining 45 targets are unauthorized for strikes, of which 23 are situated within restricted and prohibited areas. DIA estimates that 82 percent of all of the significant military targets (JCS and non-JCS) in North Vietnam have been authorized for attack. In addition, all SAM, AAA, and coastal defenses that pose a threat to U.S. strike forces have been authorized for attack.

2. Statement: These orders ruled out hitting more than 100 vital fixed enemy positions in North Vietnam, including most of the air defense control centers that have accounted for more than 600 U.S. planes, most of his major airfields, and all of his naval facilities.

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Comment: Reference to "100 vital fixed enemy positions" is unclear. Non-operational U.S. aircraft losses -- 635 through 20 July -- are attributed to the following elements of the air defense system:

	<u>SAM</u>	<u>MIG</u>	<u>Ground Fire/Other</u>
Aircraft Lost	72	23	540

All radar and communications facilities except those located in the restricted and prohibited zones and those on air bases not authorized for attack are available as targets. Of 23 significant airfields in North Vietnam, 11 are JCS targets. Of the total, 8 are capable of handling jets and 7 of these are JCS targets. Three of the 8 have been struck. Heavy and concentrated attacks have not been made against 8 airfields.

All of North Vietnam's 18 major and minor naval bases are authorized for attack except Hanoi and Haiphong. Port Wallut was authorized only on 8 August 1967.

3. Statement: That three-fourths of the enemy's petroleum storage targets were still untouched despite the "much publicized and prayerful presidential decision" a year ago to bomb them.

Comment: All of the JCS targeted POL sites have been struck, leaving an estimated 13.5 percent of pre-bombing storage capacity intact. Total petroleum storage capacity including

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dispersed POL, is equivalent to about ~~85~~⁶⁵ percent of pre-bombing capacity. Of present petroleum storage capacity, only 10 percent is situated within restricted or prohibited areas. The remaining 90 percent is subject to air strike without high-level approval.

4. Statement: That roughly one-third of the enemy's total power targets and all enemy hydroelectric generating facilities were forbidden targets.

Comment: Of the 20 JCS targeted electric power installations in North Vietnam, air strikes have been conducted against 14, which account for 88 percent of the total generating capacity of 187,000 kw. Of these 14, the only installation presently in service is the Hanoi powerplant which was authorized for a restrike on 8 August 1967. All plants feeding the national grid have been struck.

One small hydroelectric powerplant at Ban Thach was put out of operation for a period of two years by air strikes during 1965. The only large hydroelectric powerplant in North Vietnam is the Thac Ba plant near Yen Bai, completion of which is some one and one-half to two years away. With the exception of two small hydroelectric powerplants located in the Chicom Buffer Zone -- with a combined capacity of 3,000 kw -- there are no other hydro plants of significance in the country. Most of those that do exist combine irrigation and production of electricity in small facilities.

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5. Statement: That sixty percent of key targets making up the enemy's transport network were immune, or that only a quarter of the transport targets or a third of the railroad facilities and bridges had ever been hit, that all seaport targets and canal locks were off limits, and that most enemy repair shops could not be hit.

Comment: Nearly all rail and highway facilities including most of those few in the prohibited zones are authorized. There is no way of justifying the claim that 60 percent of key targets are immune. The 8 August 1967 authorization included 3 additional bridges. Seven bridges remain unauthorized, 4 of them in the Chicom buffer zone. The major seaports, Hanoi and Haiphong, have not been struck. While locks themselves have not been authorized for attack, inland waterways supporting movement of military logistics are subject to attack.

6. Statement: For two years high-level directives ruled out hitting 5 out of 6 key industrial targets, and that 90 percent of war-making industrial bases were unscathed.

Comment: There are 8 industrial targets on the JCS target list -- 5 remain unauthorized. Of these 5 targets, the Hanoi Machine Tool Plant is located within the Hanoi prohibited zone, the Viet Tri Chemical Plant is inoperable resulting from loss of electric power supplies, and 3 are fertilizer plants. Although not carried as

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attacked or as authorized for air strikes, both the Bac Giang Chemical Fertilizer Plant and the Phu Tho Chemical Fertilizer Plant have been damaged.

As a whole, modern industry does not play a significant role in sustaining North Vietnam's ability to continue the war. The plants authorized for strikes were struck as follows:

<u>JCS Number</u>	<u>Plant</u>	<u>Date of Initial Strike</u>
	Lang Chi Explosive Plant	July 1965
	Thai Nguyen Iron and Steel Complex	March 1967
	Haiphong Cement Plant	April 1967

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JCS Targets Unstruck and Unauthorized as of 8 August 1967

<u>JCS Target Group</u>	<u>No. of JCS Targets</u>	<u>Of Which Unstruck</u>	<u>Unstruck & Unauthorized</u>	<u>Percent Unstruck</u>	<u>Percent Unstruck & Unauthorized</u>
Airfields	11	5	4	45	36
Bridges	61	11	7	18	11
Railroad Yards and Repair Shops	5	1	1	20	20
Locks	8	7	7	88	88
Military Barracks, Supply and Ordnance Depots, and Ammunition Depots	91	8	7	9	8
ROL Storage Facilities	13	0	0	0	0
Communication Facilities	5	3	3	60	60
Port Facilities and Naval Bases (Including Mineable Areas)	15	7	6	47	40
RAM Support Facilities	1	0	0	0	0
Radar Sites	5	0	0	0	0
Electric Powerplants	19	5	5	26	26
Other Industrial Facilities	8	5	5	63	63
Total	243	45	45	21	19

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ANNEX C

Restricted and Prohibited Areas Subject to Control and Authorization
Effective as of 30 July 1967

1. Chicom Buffer Zone a/ Area within 30 NM of the Chinese border from the border of Laos eastward to 106° E longitude and within 25 NM of the Chinese border from 106° longitude to the Gulf of Tonkin.
2. Hanoi:
 Prohibited Area b/ The area within 10 NM of the center of Hanoi.

 Restricted Area c/ The area within 30 NM of the center of Hanoi, excluding the Hanoi Prohibited Area.
3. Haiphong:
 Prohibited Area b/ The area within four NM of the center of Haiphong.

 Restricted Area c/ The area within 10 NM of the center of Haiphong, excluding the Haiphong Prohibited Area.

a. No strikes were authorized in this zone to our knowledge until 8 August 1967.

b. In prohibited areas authorization must be received for each strike on a facility.

c. In restricted areas once authorization is received for a target, that target may be restruck without further approval. Exceptions: Dispersed FOL and ECM support facilities within the Hanoi and Haiphong Restricted Areas (excluding Prohibited Areas) may be attacked after positive identification and after notification to Washington of plan to attack. In addition, armed reconnaissance against nearly all lines of communication and associated targets including flak suppression is authorized.

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Supplementary Authorization Issued on 8 August 1967

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